

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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INFO AMCONSUL KARACHI

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SUBJ: PEOPLES' PARTY SELECTS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

REF: ISLAMABAD 6155

SUMMARY: RULING PEOPLES' PARTY HAS SELECTED TWO PUNJABIS AS ITS CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT AND SPEAKER OF ASSEMBLY UNDER NEW CONSTITUTION. CURRENT SPEAKER FAZAL ELAHI NOMINATED FOR PRESIDENT AND OBSCURE MULTAN MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY NOMINATED FOR SPEAKER. THEIR ELECTION FOREGONE CONCLUSION. VARIOUS CHANGES IN MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIOS AND IN PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS LIKELY DURING COMING WEEKS. END SUMMARY.

1. PEOPLES' PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP AUGUST 7 SELECTED CURRENT SPEAKER OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CHAUDHRI FAZAL ELAHI AS PPP CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT. GROUP ALSO SELECTED FAROOQ ALL, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBER FROM MULTAN, AS NOMINEE FOR SPEAKER OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT AND JOINT OPPOSITION IN ASSEMBLY HAVE SELECTED NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY MNA AMIRZADA KHAN TO OPPOSE ELAHI FOR PRESIDENT. THIRD CANDIDATURE FILED
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BY LOCAL RAWALPINDI ECCENTRIC. ELECTION FOR SPEAKER

WILL BE CONDUCTED AUGUST 8. ELECTION FOR PRESIDENT WILL BE HELD AUGUST 10. ELECTION CONCLUSIONS FOREGONE GIVEN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF PPP AND SUPPORTING GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS (110 VOTES OF TOTAL 146 IN ASSEMBLY AND 32 VOTES OF TOTAL 45 IN SENATE.

2. IN SELECTING RULING PARTY NOMINEES FOR KEY NON-MINISTERIAL CENTRAL GOVERNMENT POSITIONS, BHUTTO HAS ACHIEVED NEAT BALANCE OF REGIONAL REPRESENTATION. PRESIDENT AND SPEAKER DESIGNATE ARE PUNJABIS; BHUTTO, WHO WILL BECOME PRIME MINISTER, IS, OF COURSE, SINDHI WHILE SENATE CHAIRMAN IS FRONTIER PATHAN AND SENATE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN IS FROM BALUCHISTAN. THUS ALL FOUR PROVINCES OF PAKISTAN HAVE AT LEAST ONE REPRESENTATIVE.

3. ELAHI'S NOMINATION AS PRESIDENT WIDELY EXPECTED DESPITE RUMORS THAT OTHER PERSONS WERE BEING CONSIDERED BY BHUTTO. IT APPEARS THAT BHUTTO KEPT ALL CONCERNED, PERHAPS INCLUDING ELAHI HIMSELF, GUESSING UNTIL LAST MINUTE, TECHNIQUE BHUTTO FREQUENTLY EMPLOYS. ELAHI IS ELDERLY (69), RESPECTED AND IMMINENTLY RESPECTABLE PUNJABI. HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO BECOME PLIABLE FIGURE-HEAD WHICH NEW CONSTITUTION ENVISAGES. BIO DATA ON FAROOQ ALI WILL BE SUBMITTED WHEN AVAILABLE.

4. COMING INTO FORCE OF NEW CONSTITUTION AUGUST 14 WITH ITS PROVISION REQUIRING NON-ELECTED MINISTERS TO RESIGN WITHIN 6 MONTHS HAS GIVEN RISE TO WIDESPREAD RUMORS THAT WHOLESALE RESHUFFLING OF CENTRAL AND PROVINCIAL MINISTRIES IS IN OFFING. ALSO CURRENT IS MUCH TALK THAT BHUTTO WILL APPOINT NUMBER OF SUPER SECRETARIES (SECRETARYS GENERAL) TO RIDE HERD ON CERTAIN MINISTRIES. ALTHOUGH WE ANTICIPATE NUMBER OF CHANGES TO FULFILL CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS AS WELL AS TO IMPLEMENT STATED PPP POLICY OF KEEPING PARTY OFFICE-HOLDERS FROM SIMULTANEOUSLY HOLDING MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIOS, WE ANTICIPATE THAT BHUTTO WILL RESHUFFLE VARIOUS PROTFOLOS GRADUALLY OVER PERIOD OF WEEKS, IF NOT MONTHS. SHUFFLE IN GOVERNORS/CHIEF MINISTERS OF PUNJAB, BALUCHISTAN, AND FRONTIER WILL BE REQUIRED AUGUST 14. PROBABLY THAT CURRENT GOVERNORS IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THESE PROVINCES WILL BECOME CHIEF MINISTERS ALTHOUGH BALUCHISTAN PARLIAMENTARY SITUATION, I.E., WHICH PARTY HAS MAJORITY, STILL UNCLEAR.
SOBER

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